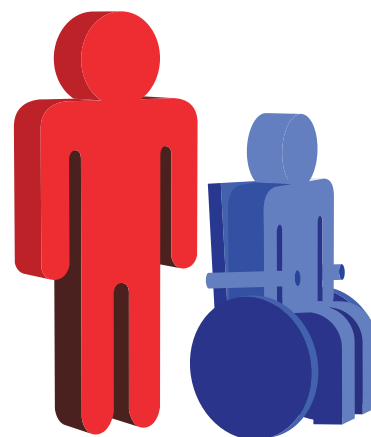


Dialogue

The newsletter of the Human Resources Division, May 2011



ITD's Assistive Technology Lab

The efforts of the Commonwealth to be a model employer of people with disabilities are aided greatly by the state's Assistive Technology Lab. The Lab has a wide variety of specialized products (referred to as "assistive technology") that allow people with various disabilities to use computers. Some of the products available in this facility are screen readers (speech synthesis), screen magnification, and voice recognition software.

The Information Technology Division offers the Lab as a facility for state agencies to test applications, websites, and even documents to be sure they will work properly with assistive technologies. This is an essential part of ensuring IT usability for all state employees, businesses, and residents.

Integrating accessibility testing into development and implementation lifecycles is the most cost-effective way of assuring universal usability. Having a testing facility makes it easy for developers and integrators to determine if their use of accessibility best practices work as expected with assistive technologies. This means problems can be detected early, when they are easier and cheaper to fix.

The Lab staff are available to help state agency staff and their vendors use assistive technologies, which can have a steep learning curve, to conduct testing. They also provide advice regarding desktop testing tools and techniques, as well as insights into the requirements of the state accessibility standards and how to meet them. In turn, exposure to the practical issues faced by developers and integrators helps Lab staff in their participation in the formulation of state accessibility guidance, policies and standards.

You are welcome to come by to see assistive technologies in action—or even do some quick testing—during the Assistive Technology Lab's Open Hour on Wednesdays from 11:00 a.m. to noon. The Lab is located in Room 804 of the McCormack Building at One Ashburton Place, in Boston. Please contact the Lab staff in advance of a visit to be sure enough equipment and time is available: **617-626-4462** or **ITD-DL-AssistiveTechnologyTeam@massmail.state.ma.us**. Other times for formal testing can be arranged by appointment. For more information about information technology accessibility, see **Mass.Gov/accessibility**. ■



The Commonwealth:
Working to be a Model Employer

Are we making progress?

Figure 1. The Percentage of Self-Identified **Executive Branch Employees** from March 2007 to March 2011

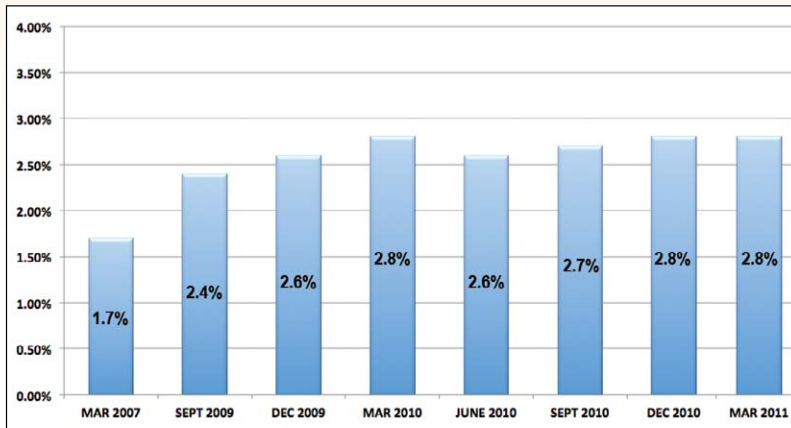


Figure 2. The Percentage of Self-Identified **Executive Branch Management Employees** from March 2007 to March 2011

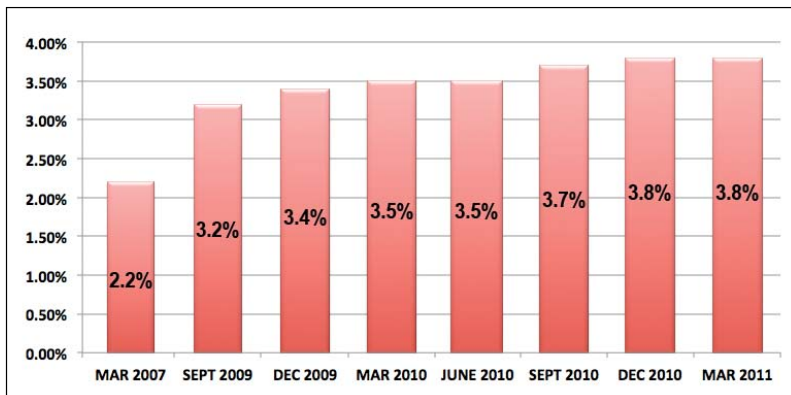
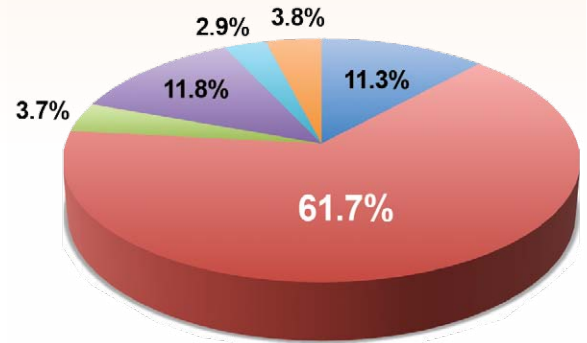


Figure 3. The Percentage of Self-identified Executive Branch Managers and Employees by EEO-4 Job Category as of close of Quarter 3, FY11



- Management
- Professional
- Technician
- Office/Clerical
- Service/Maintenance
- Other

Note:

Other Positions include Protected Service Positions (sworn and non-sworn) and Skilled Craft Positions



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